

STATEMENT OF SUBSTANCE OF INTERVIEW

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 3, 2007. Claims 1 to 8, 10 and 12 to 18 remain in the application. Claims 1 and 16 to 18 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The Applicant and his undersigned attorney thank Examiner Lovel for her courtesies and thoughtful treatment afforded during an interview conducted by telephone on June 27, 2007. Also present at the interview was Examiner Kuen Lu. Applicant's Statement of the Substance of the Interview follows.

At the interview, an amendment to the independent claims was proposed so as to recite the search information acquired from the input image with greater specificity, and in particular to recite "wherein said second search information comprises a total number of blocks obtained by region segmentation of the input image, and it is determined whether said total number of blocks falls within a predetermined range". It was explained that U.S. Patent No. 6,941,323 (Galperin), which the Office Action relies on for "region segmentation", is only seen to compare objects within images on a single object-by-object basis. Examiner Lovel tentatively indicated that such an amendment would overcome the art rejection.

Therefore, the independent claims have been amended in accordance with the proposed amendments. Claim 8 has been amended in accordance with the changes to Claim 1. Additionally, the claims have been amended to replace certain instances of

“image file” with “original data file”, which is closer to the original language of these claims, but this change is not believed to affect the allowability of the claims.

In this regard, the aforementioned amendments are hereby being presented as a Preliminary Amendment, and a Request for Continued Examination is being filed concurrently herewith so as to obtain entry and consideration of the Preliminary Amendment.

In light of the agreements made during the interview and the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests same.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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